

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of:  
Stephen H. Decatur

Confirmation No.: 8192

Application No.: 10/004,603

Art Unit: 3629

Filed: October 23, 2001

Examiner: M. L. Brooks

For: MOTIVATING PROSPECTING FOR  
VALUABLE COMPONENTS

**DECLARATION PURSUANT TO 37 CFR §1.131**

In connection with the Applicant's Response to the non-final Office Action dated November 1, 2007, this Declaration sets forth the pertinent facts proving conception of the claimed invention no later than October 11, 2000, and diligence until at least constructive reduction to practice, with the filing of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/249,304, on November 16, 2000, and the eventual filing of the instant application as U.S. Application Serial No. 10/004,603, on October 23, 2001.

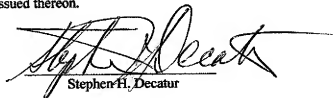
1. I, Stephen H. Decatur, am the sole listed inventor for U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/004,603 entitled: "Motivating Prospecting for Valuable Components."
2. I, Stephen H. Decatur, conceived the claimed invention no later than October 11, 2000, as evidenced by the invention disclosure questionnaire (hereafter "Disclosure") attached to an email dated October 11, 2000 (*see* Tab 1). The subject matter of said Disclosure is the basis for the claimed subject matter in

both U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/249,304 and U.S. Application Serial No. 10/004,603.

3. I, Stephen H. Decatur, conceived the claimed invention no later than October 11, 2000, as set forth above in the United States.
4. I, Stephen H. Decatur, diligently worked on the reduction to practice of the invention until at least the filing of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/249,304 on November 16, 2000 (*see* Tab 2), as evidenced by (i) various fields of the Disclosure (*see* Tab 1) discussing the conception and completion of the invention; (ii) an email to Mr. Robert Sloat in the BP Amoco Corporation Law Department dated October 11, 2000, referencing the Disclosure as an attachment (without signed pages) as shown in Tab 1; and (iii) an email from Mr. Robert Sloat dated October 12, 2000, discussing the proposed filing of a patent application (*see* Tab 3).
5. I, Stephen H. Decatur, continued to diligently work on the reduction to practice of the invention until the filing of U.S. Application Serial No. 10/004,603, on October 23, 2001 (*see* Tab 4), as evidenced by: (i) an email from Lottie C. Wanning, an associate of Mr. Robert Sloat, dated December 1, 2000, requesting I, Stephen H. Decatur, sign page 4 of the Disclosure (*see* Tab 5); and (ii) a letter from Mr. Robert Sloat dated March 14, 2001, requesting I, Stephen H. Decatur, execute the assignment for U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/249,304 (*see* Tab 6).

I, Stephen H. Decatur, hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Signed this 14 day of April 2008.



Stephen H. Decatur

# TAB 1

**From:**  
**Sent:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:**

Decatur, Steve H  
Wednesday, October 11, 2000 10:01 AM  
Sloot, Robert E.

Bob,  
I got your voice mail this morning.

Attached is a draft of the patent form you sent.



## INVENTION DISCLOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Descriptive Title:

Virtual Prospect

2. Company/Business Unit (include Project No.):

3. Date when you conceived the invention? February, 2000

Specifically identify and attach copies of all notebook pages, letters, reports, drawings, and memos relating to the invention.

Sent to Robert Sloat on 10/3/00.

4. Earliest disclosure to others within the company (where, when, and to whom; oral or written; cite records):

December, 1999 in Houston, Texas to Nitoy Shah. The first written records and meetings with others date to February, 2000.

5. Earliest date invention was operated or made (when and where, who observed the tests):

Pilot is preparing to launch in late October, 2000.

Records relied on:

6. Has the invention (or its product) been shown to, offered to, or described to persons outside the company? If yes, explain where, when, and the circumstances.

Schlumberger June, 2000 - discussing with Schlumberger and Geco-Prakla how Virtual Prospect would work  
PGS June, 2000 - same conversation as we had with Schlumberger. Landmark, August, 2000 -

[REDACTED]

If so, describe:

[REDACTED]

8. Has there been or are there plans to use, disclose, publish, or sell your invention (or its product)?
- [REDACTED]

If so, explain:

[REDACTED]

9. What problems did your invention solve? Summarize prior practice. How does your invention solve the problem or have an advantage over prior practice? Any other potential uses? How will invention benefit the company?

The Virtual Prospect concept allows bp to develop prospective exploration opportunities from a wide array of individuals that are not employees. The concept allows bp to purchase opportunities that bp likes. Prior practice has been to hire consultants, resulting in payments with unsatisfactory results. This practice can also be used to use the website to improve field production by paying for production opportunities that bp finds attractive. The company will benefit through identifying, drilling, and producing additional gas and oil exploration prospects.

10. Identify the scope of patent and literature searched for prior art. List the computer search reference number, and list and enclose all patents and publicly-available documents relating to your invention.

11. Attach a detailed description of invention. If drawings or sketches are useful, submit a copy and refer to drawings in description by numbered items. Specific examples (including test procedures and protocols) and operable ranges for processes should be included.
12. Brief description of invention (try to use less than 100 words for abstracting purposes):

- 1) Advertise bp exploration blocks, through a public website for geoscientists interested in interpreting geological and geophysical data.
- 2) Interested geoscientists apply for rights to interpret geological and geophysical data on bp blocks.
- 3) Bp screen geoscientists applications and selects successful candidates.
- 4) Successful geoscience candidates receive geological and geophysical data from bp and begin data interpretation.
- 5) Successful candidates review data interpretations with bp personnel. Bp personnel pay candidates for interpreted prospects bp selects to drill.

13. Expected scope of invention. (State also how and to what extent possible equivalents in materials, steps, or machine elements have been investigated.)

6) Successful candidate reviews unselected prospects with other oil companies to select to drill. Other oil companies pay candidates for prospects they select to drill.

14. Signatures

INVENTOR(S)

Stephen Decatur

(Printed Name)

*Stephen Decatur*  
(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

Citizenship

Social Security No.

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

Citizenship

Social Security No.

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

Citizenship

Social Security No.

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

Citizenship

Social Security No.

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

(Residence)

Citizenship

Social Security No.

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Street Address)

City County State Zip

(Residence)

Citizenship

Social Security No.

WITNESS(ES)

Tom Niswander

Deborah Hiarker

(Printed Name)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Signature)

December 4, 2000

December 4, 2000

(Date)

(Date)

December 4, 2000

15. Who in the Company should review this disclosure?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# TAB 2



**LICENSE FOR FOREIGN FILING UNDER**  
**Title 35, United States Code, Section 184**  
**Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 5.11 & 5.15**

**GRANTED**

The applicant has been granted a license under 35 U.S.C. 184, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" followed by a date appears on this form. Such licenses are issued in all applications where the conditions for issuance of a license have been met, regardless of whether or not a license may be required as set forth in 37 CFR 5.15. The scope and limitations of this license are set forth in 37 CFR 5.15(a) unless an earlier license has been issued under 37 CFR 5.15(b). The license is subject to revocation upon written notification. The date indicated is the effective date of the license, unless an earlier license of similar scope has been granted under 37 CFR 5.13 or 5.14.

This license is to be retained by the licensee and may be used at any time on or after the effective date thereof unless it is revoked. This license is automatically transferred to any related applications(s) filed under 36 CFR 1.53(d). This license is not retroactive.

The grant of a license does not in any way lessen the responsibility of a licensee for the security of the subject matter as imposed by any Government contract or the provisions of existing laws relating to espionage and the national security or the export of technical data. Licensees should apprise themselves of current regulations especially with respect to certain countries, of other agencies, particularly the Office of Defense Trade Controls, Department of State (with respect to Arms, Munitions and Implements of War (22 CFR 121-128)); the Office of Export Administration, Department of Commerce (15 CFR 370.10 (j)); the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury (31 CFR Parts 500+) and the Department of Energy.

**NOT GRANTED**

No license under 35 U.S.C. 184 has been granted at this time, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" DOES NOT appear on this form. Applicant may still petition for a license under 37 CFR 5.12, if a license is desired before the expiration of 6 months from the filing date of the application. If 6 months has lapsed from the filing date of this application and the licensee has not received any indication of a secrecy order under 35 U.S.C. 181, the licensee may foreign file the application pursuant to 37 CFR 5.15 (b).

**PLEASE NOTE** the following information about the Filing Receipt:

- The articles such as "a," "an" and "the" are not included as the first words in the title of an application. They are considered to be unnecessary to the understanding of the title.
- The words "new," "improved," "improvements in" or "relating to" are not included as first words in the title of an application because a patent application, by nature, is a new idea or improvement.
- The title may be truncated if it consists of more than 600 characters (letters and spaces combined).
- The docket number allows a maximum of 25 characters.
- If your application was submitted under 37 CFR 1.10, your filing date should be the "date in" found on the Express Mail label. If there is a discrepancy, you should submit a request for a corrected Filing Receipt along with a copy of the Express Mail label showing the "date in."
- The title is recorded in sentence case.

Any corrections that may need to be done to your Filing Receipt should be directed to:

**Assistant Commissioner for Patents**  
**Office of Initial Patent Examination**  
**Customer Service Center**  
**Washington, DC 20231**

# TAB 3

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Sloat, Robert E.  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 12, 2000 11:18 AM  
**To:** Zuffante, Margy V  
**Cc:** Gabala, James A.  
**Subject:** Virtual Prospect Invention Disclosure

Please enter this in the [REDACTED] disclosure system and let me know the case # assigned. I will get a hard copy and forward it to you. [REDACTED] We probably will file very soon on it.

**Bob**

Robert E. Sloat  
[REDACTED]

# TAB 4



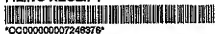
## UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	GRP/ART/UNIT	FIL FEE REC'D	ATTY. DOCKET NO.	DRAWINGS	TOT CLAIMS	IND CLAIMS
10/004,803	10/23/2001	2161	824	84.0046	2	10	4

CONFIRMATION NO. 8192

## FILING RECEIPT



\*CC00000000724897\*

John H. Bouchard  
Schlumberger Technology Corporation  
Suite 1700  
5599 San Felipe  
Houston, TX 77056-2722

Date Mailed: 12/31/2001

Receipt is acknowledged of this nonprovisional Patent Application. It will be considered in its order and you will be notified as to the results of the examination. Be sure to provide the U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING DATE, NAME OF APPLICANT, and TITLE OF INVENTION when inquiring about this application. Fees transmitted by check or draft are subject to collection. Please verify the accuracy of the data presented on this receipt. If an error is noted on this Filing Receipt, please write to the Office of Initial Patent Examination's Customer Service Center. Please provide a copy of this Filing Receipt with the changes noted thereon. If you received a "Notice to File Missing Parts" for this application, please submit any corrections to this Filing Receipt with your reply to the Notice. When the USPTO processes the reply to the Notice, the USPTO will generate another Filing Receipt incorporating the requested corrections (if appropriate).

## Applicant(s)

Stephen H. Decatur, Houston, TX;

## Domestic Priority data as claimed by applicant

THIS APPLN CLAIMS BENEFIT OF 60/249,304 11/16/2000

## Foreign Applications

If Required, Foreign Filing License Granted 12/31/2001

Projected Publication Date: 05/16/2002

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

## Title

Motivating prospecting for valuable components

Preliminary Class

705

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**Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 5.11 & 5.15**

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This license is to be retained by the licensee and may be used at any time on or after the effective date thereof unless it is revoked. This license is automatically transferred to any related applications(s) filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d). This license is not retroactive.

The grant of a license does not in any way lessen the responsibility of a licensee for the security of the subject matter as imposed by any Government contract or the provisions of existing laws relating to espionage and the national security or the export of technical data. Licensees should apprise themselves of current regulations especially with respect to certain countries, of other agencies, particularly the Office of Defense Trade Controls, Department of State (with respect to Arms, Munitions and Implements of War (22 CFR 121-128)); the Office of Export Administration, Department of Commerce (15 CFR 370.10 (j)); the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury (31 CFR Parts 500+) and the Department of Energy.

**NOT GRANTED**

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# TAB 5

**Wanninger, Lottie C.**

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**From:** Wanninger, Lottie C.  
**Sent:** Friday, December 01, 2000 2:32 PM  
**To:** Decatur, Steve H  
**Cc:** Zuffante, Margy V  
**Subject:** Invention Disclosure Questionnaire - Virtual Prospect

Per our telephone conversation last week, I have finally been able to locate a copy of the Invention Disclosure Questionnaire form you completed. I have attached a copy below. Please print an original of the attached, and complete page four of the form, then sign it and return it to me in Chicago, [REDACTED]

Thanks



NVDISC37273P.DOC

C

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# TAB 6



March 14, 2001

Steve Decatur  
[REDACTED]

U. S. Application 60/249,304, Filed November 16, 2000  
Motivating Prospecting for Valuable Components, Ref. 32,273P

In connection with the above referenced U. S. Provisional Application, filed in the United States Patent Office on November 16, 2000, enclosed you will find two execution copies of an Assignment which is now required for filing.

Please sign and have both copies of the Assignment notarized and return same to me as quickly as possible.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

*R E Sloat*

Robert E. Sloat  
[REDACTED] Chicago

/lcw

Enclosure

[REDACTED]